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***Jordan National Tourism Strategy Retreat –
Food and Lodging Group Product Development Team
Final Report
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Abstract

This report summarizes the proceedings of the work that was performed by the Food and Lodging Group, which is part of the Product Development Team, during the Jordan National Tourism Strategy Retreat that took place on the 1-2 April 2005. The report presents a brief introduction on the work of the group and the retreat that took place, and presents the main output of the group: the final action plan for the implementation of Jordan National Tourism Strategy in the area of Food and Lodging. In addition to the above, this report presents the initial action plan that the group started working with, and the top five priority actions agreed on by the group.

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List of Acronyms

ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
IDB	Industrial Development Bank
JHA	Jordan Hotel Association
JIB	Jordan Investment Board
JRA	Jordan Restaurant Association
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and international Cooperation
MoTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PDG	Product Development Group
RSCN	Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
VTO	Vocational Training Organization
YEA	Young Entrepreneurs Association
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association
YWMA	Young Women Muslim Association

Executive Summary

The National Tourism Strategy Retreat was conducted with the objective to develop a draft national time bound action plan for the implementation of the tourism strategy and identify priority actions to be implemented immediately in 2005. Prior to the retreat the Food and Lodging Group developed work programs and recommendations for actions. During the retreat, the group worked together, with participation of additional stakeholders to identify actions for the identified work programs, priorities of these actions, estimated start time and duration, as well as champion and supporting institutions for each of the identified actions. Finally, the group identified the top five priority actions, to be implemented immediately, out of all actions that were given priority 1 by the group participants

1. Introduction

The National Tourism Strategy Retreat was conducted with the objective to develop a draft national time bound action plan for the implementation of the tourism strategy and identify priority actions to be implemented immediately in 2005. The retreat was based on a participatory approach aimed at engaging a wide group of tourism experts and stakeholders to develop a nationally-endorsed action plan.

2. Methodology

Prior to the retreat the Food and Lodging Group, which is one of the groups constituting the Product Development Team, has met four times during which the group has developed work programs and recommendations for actions, *Appendix 5* presents the pre-developed Action Plan.

The work group of food and lodging was lead by Ms. Lina Annab with support from the Product Development Group Leader, Mr. Zeid Goussous. *Appendix 1* presents the full list of group participants and contributors to the discussion of the group discussions.

The work of the group was guided by the pre-developed action plan, as well as by the tourism value chain. The food and lodging consists of hotels, motels, camping, bed and breakfast, timeshare, friends and relatives, resorts, restaurants, fast food, outside catering. However, for the purpose of discussion and action plan the following components were eliminated: timeshare, friends and relatives, fast food, and outside catering.

3. Discussion and Results

During day 1 of the retreat, participants of the Food and Lodging Group discussed the pre-developed work programs, agreed on actions, priorities for these actions, priority of these actions, estimated start time and duration. Also, the work group agreed on a champion who will be responsible for the promotion of each action, as well as the supporting institutions that could provide technical expertise, resources, advice, or general support for the successful implementation of identified action. The group started with 21 work programs, and these were filtered down to 13 work programs, comprising a total of 25 actions. Due to time limit, the group did not estimate required budget resources for the identified actions, and therefore, the table does not have the budget column. *Appendix 3*, presents the final action plan as resulting from retreat discussions of the Food and Lodging Group.

On day 2 of the retreat, the group reconvened in order to identify the top five priority actions, to be implemented immediately, out of all actions that were given priority 1 by the group participants (a total of 12 actions were given priority 1). For this purpose, group participants identified their own top five actions individually, and then through voting and discussion consensus was reached on top five priority actions. The top five actions are presented in *Appendix 2*.

Some of the previously identified work programs and actions were deemed by group participants to be more relevant to the work of other groups. An example of such work program is the development of MICE facilities, which after deliberations was moved to be discussed by the Service Group, Appendix 4 presents a list of these issues which were identified for work by other groups.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Group Participants and Contributors

<i>Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>
Lina Annab – Group Leader	Zara Investment
Dr. Adnan Habboo	Independent Consultant (Tourism & Hospitality Projects Planning, Development, and Management)
Charlie Twal	Madaba Inn
Suheil Marrar	Olympia Hotel / JHA
Mr.X	?
Thurayya Husseini	Lawrence Tours
Issam Fakhreddine	JHA/ Al-Qasr Howard Johnson Hotel
Zeid Qoussous –	Product Team Leader
Mr. Shukri Salfiti	Café Mocca / JRA
Helena Naber – Team Facilitator	UNDP
Contributors:	
HE Dr. Alia Hatough-Bouran	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
H.E. Dr. Faisal Al Mubarak	Supreme Commission for Tourism/ Saudi Arabia
Nadim Muasher	Chairman of the NTS Strategy Steering Committee
Ibrahim Osta	Senior Policy Advisor to Minister/ AMIR-MoTA

Appendix 2: Top Five Priority Actions to be Implemented in 2005

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S/G*</i>	<i>Area+</i>	<i>Priority (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Work Program 1 Upgrade standard of service in establishments (Human Resources – training).	Action 1. Introduce and conduct training programs in all relevant establishments (in house or otherwise) carried out by the relevant professional associations, in collaboration with secondary hospitality educational institutions, to be endorsed and recognized by reputable training institutions.	N M S	N M S	1	Q3 2005	Ongoing	Ammon	MOTA JHA JRA VTO
Work Program 4 Lack of tourist accommodation facilities (all classes 1-5 stars).	Action 1. Perform capacity and needs assessment for 1-5 star accommodation facilities in selected locations.	N	Jerash Ajloun Irbid Um Qais	1	Q4 2005	6-12 months	JHA	MOTA JIB
Work Program 5 Lack of outlets with adequate food and beverage quality.	Action 3. Develop a Michelin-like quality accreditation mechanism for stand alone restaurants.	N M S	N M S	1	Q3 2005	Ongoing	JRA	MOTA
Work Program 6 Lax enforcement of safety, hygiene, and public health measures.	Action 1. Enforce adherence to existing executive regulations related to safety, hygiene, and public health issues.	N M S	N M S	1	Q3 2005	Ongoing	JRA	Civil defense Ministry of Health
Work Program 12 Create stand alone theme restaurants	Action 1. Create incentives for local investors in all regions (except Amman) to invest in stand alone theme restaurants.	N M S	N M S	1	Q3 2005	1 year	JRA	JIB MOTA YEA

* N-North, M=Middle, S=South, G=General (not location specific)

+ Area: Identification of specific locality, if applicable.

Appendix 3. Final Action Plan

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G*</i>	<i>Area⁺</i>	<i>Priority (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duratio n</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Work Program 1 Upgrade standard of service in establishments (Human resources – training).	Action 1. Introduce and conduct training programs in all relevant establishments (in house or otherwise) carried out by the relevant professional associations in collaboration with secondary hospitality educational institutions to be endorsed and recognized by reputable training institutions. [PRIORITY!]	N M S	N M S	1	Q3 2005	Ongoing	Ammon	MOTA JHA JRA VTO
	Action 2. Legalize gambling outlets within 5 star hotels for non-Jordanians (casinos).	M S	Aqaba Dead Sea	4	2008	3-5 yrs	5-star establishments	JHA MOTA Ministry of Finance
Work Program 2 System of classifications	Action 1. Revise the system of classification for hotels, resorts, rest houses, camp sites, and others, as well as for restaurants and other classifiable tourist service-providers establishments.	N M S	N M S	2	Q1 2006	1 year	MOTA	JHA JRA
Work Program 3 System of licensing qualifications.	Action 1. Revisit the licensing qualifications standards for all tourism services providers (hotels, resorts, rest houses, camp sites, and others, as well as for restaurants).	N M S	N M S	1	Q2 2005	1 year	MOTA	JHA JRA
	Action 2. Lift the restrictions of alcohol sale in 1-2 star establishments (hotels and restaurants).	N M S	N M S	1	Q2 2005	1 Year	MOTA	JHA JRA

Issue	Action to Take	N/M/S /G*	Area ⁺	Priority (1-5)	Start Date	Duration	Champion	Supporting
Work Program 4 Lack of tourist accommodation facilities (all classes 1-5 stars).	Action 1. Assess capacity and need for 1-5 star accommodation facilities in selected locations. [PRIORITY!]	N	Jerash Ajloun Irbid Um Qais	1	Q4 2005	6-12 months	JHA	MOTA JIB
	Action 2. Revise incentive schemes offered to investors.	N	As above	2	Q2 2006	1 year	JIB	MOTA JHA
Work Program 5 Lack of outlets with adequate food and beverage quality.	Action 1. Plan and identify capacity required in selected locations.	N S	E.g. Ajloun Irbid Karak Shobak Aqaba Petra Wadi Rum	1	Q3 2005	6 months	JRA	MOTA
	Action 2. Introduce incentives such as tax exemptions and long term loans.	N	As above	2	Q2 2006	1 year	JIB	MOTA JRA
	Action 3. Develop a Michelin-like quality accreditation mechanism for stand alone restaurants. [PRIORITY!]	N M S	N M S		1	Q3 2005	Ongoing	JRA
Work Program 6 Lax enforcement of safety, hygiene, and public health measures.	Action 1. Enforce adherence to existing executive regulations related to safety, hygiene, and public health issues. [PRIORITY!]	N M S	N M S	1	Q3 2005	Ongoing	JRA	Civil defense Ministry of Health
	Action 2. Assist candidates through provision of micro-finance to ensure adherence to safety, hygiene, and public health measures.	N M S	N M S	2	Q2 2006	1 year	JRA	MOPIC IDB Donors

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G*</i>	<i>Area⁺</i>	<i>Priority (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Work Program 7 Upgrade existing camping and rest house facilities, and develop new sites.	Action 1. Take immediate necessary corrective measures for complete rehabilitation and for qualified and effective management of these sites.	N M S	e.g. Dibeen Wadi Mujib Mount Nebo Wadi Rum	1	Q3 2005	2 years	Owners (e.g. Social security Corporatio n)	MOTA JHA RSCN ASEZA JRA
	Action 2. Identifying sites for development of camping facilities.	N S	e.g. Pella Eshtafeina Anjara Wadi Rum Bayda	1	Q3 2005	1 year	MOTA	JIB JHA RSCN
	Action 3. Evaluate the viability of developing national and international youth camps.	N S	N S		1	Q3 2005	1 year Ministry of Youth	Ministry of Education YWCA YWMA MOTA RSCN
Work Program 8 Encourage and create countrywide resorts reflective of geographic zones and themes (desert retreats / mountain lodges, etc.)	Action 1. Identify areas and potential sites, e.g.	N M S	N M S	2	Q2 2006	2 yrs	MOTA	JHA JIB
	a. Vicinity of Desert castles b. Umm Qais c. Ajloun d. Wadi Rum							
	Action 2. Develop project profiles	N M S	N M S	2	Q3 2006	2 years	JIB	JHA JRA MOTA YEA

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G*</i>	<i>Area⁺</i>	<i>Priority (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Work Program 9 Encourage development of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) facilities.	Action 1. Launch an awareness campaign of the Bed and Breakfast concept to potential developers inclusive of private residences.	N M S	N M S	2	Q1 2006	1 year	MOTA	Local communities Heritage Protection Regional NGO's / Associations ASEZA
	Action 2. Induct potential owners on how to operate and service Bed and Breakfast facilities.	N M S	N M S	2	Q3 2006	1 year	JHA	Municipalities Foreign agencies Educational institutions
	Action 3. Develop properties (houses) that overlook or are in the vicinity of historic sites, such as Karak and Ajloun, for use as lodging facilities.	N M S	N M S	1	Q4 2005	5 years	Local authorities	MOTA Property owners JHA
Work Program 10 Encourage use of panoramic areas for food and beverage outlets.	Action 1. Identify the locations to be explored and determine viability.	N M S	Dead Sea Panorama Salt Salt/Zai Rabad Castle Mount Nebo Amman hills	3	2007	1 year	MOTA	JRA JIB YEA Local communities
Work Program 11 Limited number of adequate 2, 3, & 4 star hotels outside of Amman.	Action 1. Create incentives for investors to invest in such establishments with emphasis on location within Airport vicinity.	M	M	2	Q2 2006	1 year	MOTA	JIB JHA IDB

Issue	Action to Take	N/M/S/G*	Area ⁺	Priority (1-5)	Start Date	Duration	Champion	Supporting
	Action 2. Include all hotel categories (all stars) in the incentives scheme of JIB investment promotion law.	N M S	N M S	2	Q3 2006	1 year	JHA	MOTA JIB
Work Program 12 Create stand alone theme restaurants.	Action 1. Create incentives for local investors in all regions (except Amman) to invest in stand alone theme restaurants. [PRIORITY!]	N S M	N M S	1	Q3 2005	1 year	JRA	JIB MOTA YEA
Work Program 13 Develop adequate furnished apartment facilities (suite hotels / apartotels) for families.	Action 1. Provide incentives to the private sector to invest in such establishments, mainly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aqaba: apartotels Amman: 4-5 star furnished apartments with support services / amenities. 	M S	Amman Aqaba	2	Q2 2006	1 year	JHA	JIB MOTA Ministry of Finance

* N-North, M=Middle, S=South, G=General (not location specific)

+ Area: Identification of specific locality, if applicable

Appendix 4: Work Programs and Actions Recommended for Other Groups

<i>Group</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>
<i>PDG – Attractions and Activities</i>	<p>Work Program: Explore potential of Wadi Rum</p> <p>Action 1. Identify Wadi Rum as a unique / prime destination for tourism services providers and encourage investors to develop tourist service establishments such as: theme restaurants – events and entertainment venues, camps – etc. without negatively affecting the environment.</p>
<i>PDG – Services</i>	<p>Work Program: Look into the paramedic / medical services throughout the tourist centers in Jordan.</p>
<i>PDG – Services</i>	<p>Work Program: Develop large-scale MICE facilities (convention and exhibition centers in Amman).</p> <p>Action 1. Prepare studies to determine extent of need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect statistics and assess demand from specialists in the field. • Recommend locations for new developments. • Recommend expansion of current covered exhibition areas at Amman International fairground to respond to market demand.
<i>PDG – Services</i>	<p>Work Program: Develop rest areas along major highways</p> <p>Action 1. Encourage private sector participation (PSP) / stress on the importance of privatizing the decrepit existing rest areas</p> <p>Action 2. Identify the rest areas that need to be developed.</p> <p>Action 3. Introduce and recommend means of improvement and upgrade.</p>
<i>PDG - Access and Transportation</i>	<p>Work Program: Revisit the licensing qualifications standards for tour operators, as part of all tourism services providers.</p>
<i>Human Resources Development Group</i>	<p>Work Program: Improve standards of curricula in schools relevant to food and lodging.</p>
<i>Marketing Group</i>	<p>Work Program: Include hotels of all categories (1-5 star hotels) in JTB promotional activities.</p>
<i>Legal and Regulatory Group</i>	<p>Work Program: Limited number of adequate 2, 3, & 4 star hotels outside of Amman.</p> <p>Action 1. Include hotels of all categories (1-5 star hotels) in the incentives scheme in JIB investment promotion law.</p>

Appendix 5: Initial Action Plan Developed by the Group

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Priority (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Supporting</i>	<i>Required Resources (budget , etc)</i>
Work Program 1 Upgrade Standard of Service in Establishments (HR – training)	Action 1. Urge all such establishments to introduce training programs (in house or otherwise) to be endorsed recognized and well reputed training institutions	G							
	Action 2. Seriously considering legalizing gambling outlets (Casinos)	G							
	Action 3. Look into the Paramedic / medical services throughout the tourist centers in Jordan	G							
Work Program 2 System of Classifications	Action 1. Revisit the system of classification for hotels / restaurants and other classified tourist service providers establishments	G		1					
Work Program 3 Licensing Qualifications	Action 1. Revisit the licensing qualifications standards for all tourism services providers (Hotels / restaurants /travel agents & tour operators)	G		1					
Work Program 4 Stress the private sector management of public assets.		G		1					
Work Program 5 Lack of tourist accommodation facilities (all classes 2-5 stars)		N	Jerash; Ajloun						

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Priorit y (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duratio n</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Suppo rting</i>	<i>Required Resources (budget , etc)</i>
Work Program 6 Lack of adequate Food and Beverage outlets	Action 1. Shed Light on the issue & Plan and identify capacity required in selected locations Action 2. Introduce incentives such tax exemptions / long term loans	N		1					
Work Program 7 Lax enforcement of safety, hygiene, and public health measures – Make funds available (mini loans/micro financing) to existing facility to enable them to upgrade their premises and adhere to such standards	Action 1. Ensure implementation of the existing executive regulations related to these issues	N		1					
Work Program 8 Upgrade existing and develop new camping facilities	Action 1. Take immediate necessary corrective measures for complete rehabilitation and for qualified and effective management of these sites	N	(Debbee n for example)	1					
Work Program 9 Encourage and create countrywide Resorts reflective of the geographic zone and theme (desert retreats/ mountain lodges, etc.)	Action 1. Shed light on the issue Action 2. Identify and plan areas of potential	N N							
Work Program 10 Encourage development of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) facilities.	Action 1. Launch an awareness campaign of the Bed & Breakfast concept	N		1					

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Priority (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Supporting</i>	<i>Required Resources (budget , etc)</i>
Work Program 11 Identify existing accommodation facilities (such as student hostels) and work on listing and licensing them.	Action 1. Conduct general survey in order to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify existing facilities and to take corrective measures; and Recommend needed similar facilities 	N		1					
Work Program 12 Encourage use of panoramic areas for F&B outlets	Action 1. Identify the locations to be explored and Recommend actions to be taken	M	Dead Sea - Salt	1					
Work Program 13 Work on developing camping sites in key areas such as Wadi Mujib – Mount Nebo – and other potential sites	Action 1. Shed light on the issue	M		1					
	Action 2. Identify locations	M							
	Action 3. Determine extent of the potentials of the identified areas	M							
	Action 4. Recommend types of camps	M							
	Action 5. Identify unique locations with potential in each of the geographic areas (North – Middle – South)	M							
	Action 6. Recommend specific actions to be taken in activating the identified locations	M							
Work Program 14 Develop large-scale MICE facilities (Convention and Exhibition centers in Amman)	Action 1. Prepare studies to determine extent of need	M							
	Action 2. Collect statistics and assess demand from specialists in the field								
	Action 3. Recommend locations								

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Priority (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Supporting</i>	<i>Required Resources (budget , etc)</i>
Work Program 15 Limited number of adequate 2 & 3 & 4 star hotels outside of Amman	Action 1. Encourage and incentivize investors to invest in such establishments	M		1					
	Action 2. Highlight need especially within the airport vicinity	M							
Work Program 16 No stand alone theme restaurants	Action 1. Encourage the concept of theme restaurants through an awareness campaign (print and TV)	M		1					
	Action 2. Assign a group of experts to advise interested parties.	M							
Work Program 17 Develop rest areas / Inns along major highways	Action 1. Encourage private sector participation (PSP) / stress on the importance of privatizing the decrepit existing rest areas	S		1					
	Action 2. Identify the rest areas that need to be developed	S							
	Action 3. Introduce and recommend means of improvement and upgrade	S							
Work Program 18 Lack of accommodation facilities in other areas (Kerak – Maan - Tafleh)	Action 1. Shed light on the issue	S							
	Action 2. Encourage private sector participation (PSP)								
	Action 3. Recommend acquisition of properties overlooking the castle for development of lodging facilities								
	Action 4. Increase accommodation capacity within the above areas while maintaining the local theme, and blending with the environment.								

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action to Take</i>	<i>N/M/S /G</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Priorit y (1-5)</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Duratio n</i>	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Suppo rting</i>	<i>Required Resources (budget , etc)</i>
Work Program 19 Lack of activities for hotel guests after 6 PM	Action 1. Introduce Jordanian soft culture / entertainment programs geared towards folkloric activities	S							
Work Program 20 develop adequate 3 and 4 star hotels, in addition to encouraging the development of furnished apartments (suite hotels / apartotels) for families.	Action 1. Provide incentives to the private sector to invest in such establishments	S							
Work Program 21 Explore potential of Wadi Rum	Action 1. Identify Wadi Rum as a unique / prime destination for tourism services providers and encourage investors to develop tourist service establishments such as: theme restaurants – events and entertainment venues, camps – etc. without negatively affecting the environment.	S							